meduza

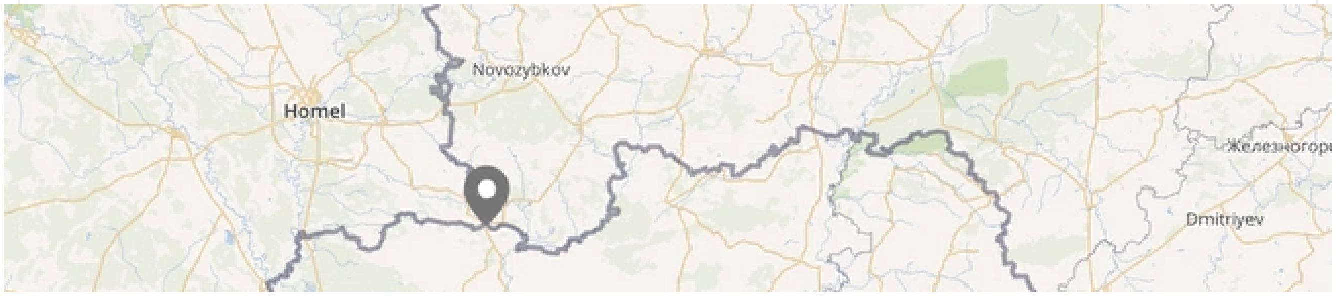
LET'S TRADE GIFTS!

NEWS

Moscow on the warpath Updates on major developments in Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine

6:07 pm, February 25, 2022

Before dawn on Thursday, February 24, Moscow time, Vladimir Putin addressed Russians for the second time in several days to announce the start of a "special military operation" in Ukraine, ostensibly to "defend the people of the Donbas," in eastern Ukraine. It rapidly became clear, however, that the Russian military had begun what Western leaders warned for months was imminent: a full-scale invasion. The government in Kyiv has confirmed dozens of deaths already, and tens of thousands of people are now internally displaced or seeking to flee abroad to escape Russian airstrikes and approaching soldiers and tanks. For coverage of the first two days of the war, see Meduza's **original live reporting**. Below, you will find subsequent updates every few hours on major developments.



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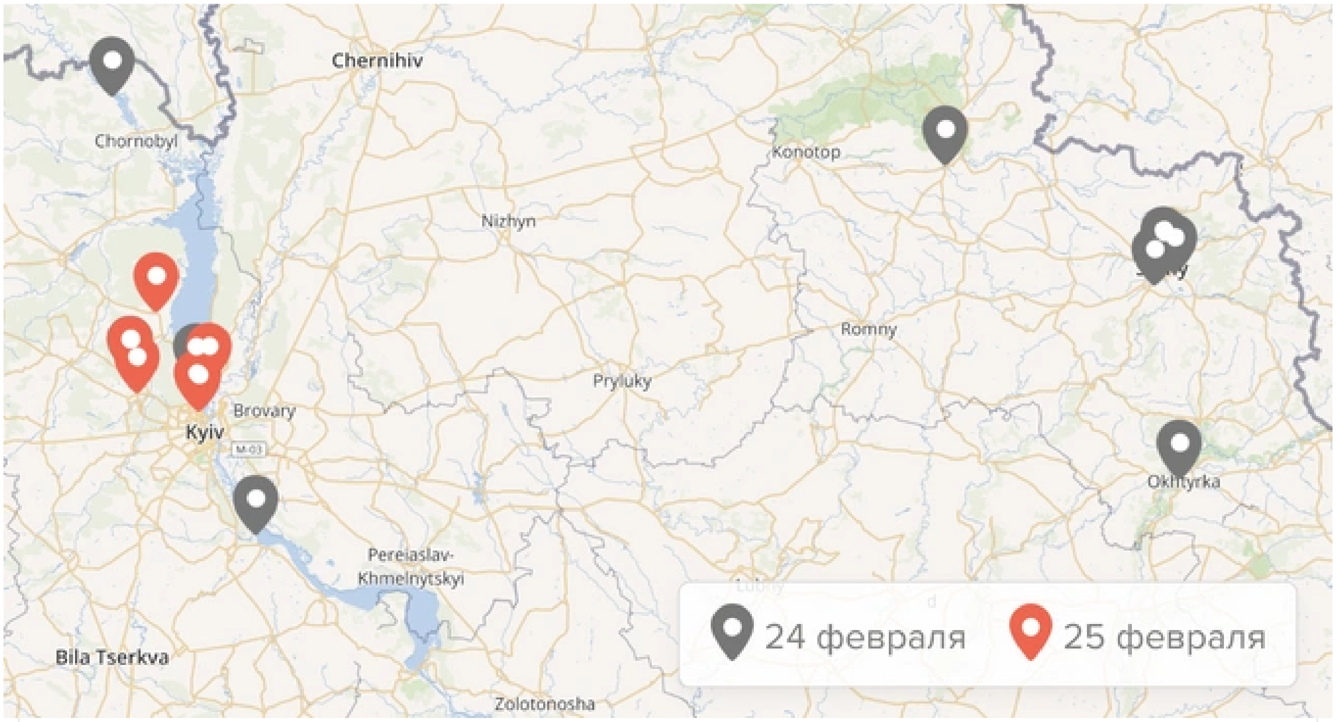

Find an interactive map showing Russian attacks across Ukraine here.

OpenMapTiles © OpenStreetMap

FLIP BROADCAST

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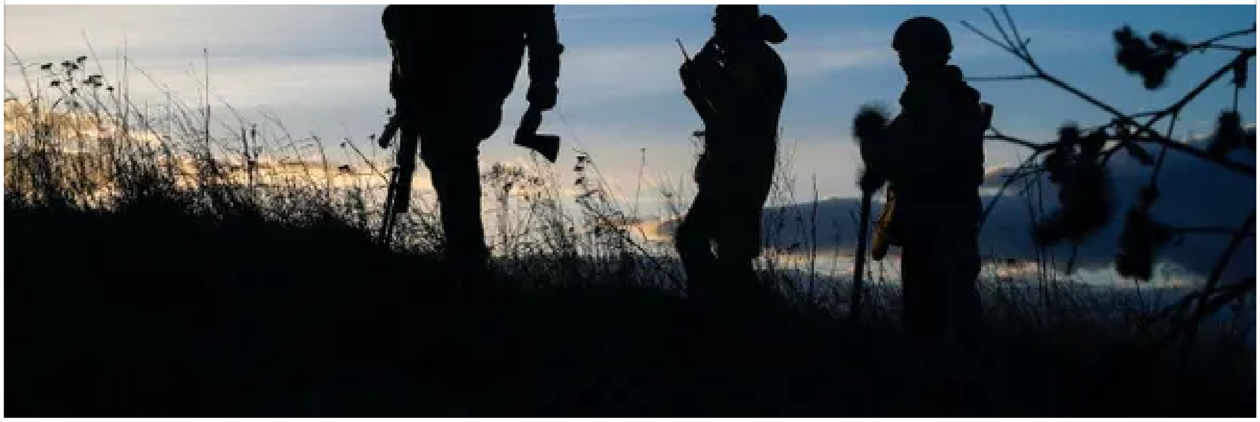
For technical reasons, Meduza is ending this live blog and moving coverage to this location:

MEDUZA'S LIVE WAR COVERAGE CONTINUES HERE



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Russia's war against Ukraine Live coverage of Moscow's full-scale invasion, part three

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Another night of major protests in Tbilisi, Georgia in support of Ukraine.

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A series of explosions in Kharkiv on the evening of February 2[illegible].

BBC News | Русская служба ✓
BBC News | Русская служба
❗Грохот взрывов в Харькове. Жители Харькова сообщают Би-би-си, что в городе сейчас гремит череда взрывов. Похоже на работу систем залпового огня.

Air raid sirens and shooting in Kyiv

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Телеканал Дождь ✓

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A residential building in central Donetsk damaged by shelling

[РИА Новости ✓]

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On the tech front

- **Silicon Valley strikes back:** Instagram has begun labeling the accounts and posts of Russian state-controlled media outlets like Sputnik, RT, and RIA Novosti. Meanwhile, YouTube is blocking content from Russian state-controlled news network RT in Ukraine.
- **More cyber attacks:** The ruling United Russia party reported that its website suffered a DDoS attack on Saturday. The Kremlin's website also couldn't be reached at certain points during the day.

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Updates on Russia's losses

- The Russian Defense Ministry has yet to report on the number of Russian soldiers killed or captured by Ukrainian forces, and continues to dismiss evidence from Kyiv as "fake."
- That said, journalists from BBC News Russian and Agentstvo have confirmed the identities of some of the Russian soldiers killed and taken prisoner.
- The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry has opened a hotline for the families of Russian soldiers who are seeking information about their loved ones.
- Bellingcat's Christo Grozev believes that at least 3,000 Russians have been killed in Ukraine so far. "Today I watched hundreds and thousands of videos, including non-public ones. And I can say that 3,000 Russian victims is the minimum figure I can confirm."

ANALYSIS FROM MEDUZA

Unreliable at best What we know about Ukrainian and Russian casualties on day three of the invasion

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'I'm panicking — where is my child?' Conscript soldiers are being sent to fight against Ukraine, their relatives say. Here's what their families told Meduza.

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News from Zelensky

In an address a few hours ago, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky said that the presidents of Turkey and Azerbaijan have offered to organize negotiations between Kyiv and Moscow. Zelensky also said that European countries have agreed to disconnect Russia from SWIFT. Later, in a tweet, Zelensky stated that he had asked the UN Secretary General to 1) deprive Russia of its voting rights on the UN Security Council, 2) to recognize Moscow's actions as genocide, 3) and help with the delivery of Russian soldiers' bodies.

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The current flight path for Russian planes traveling from Kaliningrad to Moscow, shared by Kaliningrad's governor.

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Day three of Russia’s anti-war protests

Riot police arrest an anti-war protesters in St. Petersburg. February 26, 2022.

David Frenkel / Mediazona

According to OVD-Info, at least 489 people were arrested at anti-war protests in 35 Russian cities today. In total, more than 3,000 people have been arrested at similar demonstrations across the country over the past three days.

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The 150,000 Ukrainians fleeing Russia's war — in pictures

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Updates from the Russian Defense Ministry (from about three hours ago)

- In a comment on reports about the missile strike on a residential building in Kyiv, the Russian Defense Ministry denied that its military is attacking residential areas of Ukrainian cities. This contradicts independent reports from Amnesty International.
- The Defense Ministry also reported that "DNR" forces had occupied the villages of Starohnativka, Oktyabr, Pavlopil (Donetsk region), and that "LNR" forces had captured the town of Shchastya and the village of Muratove (Luhansk region).
- In addition, the Defense Ministry claims that the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant is being guarded by Russia's airborne troops together with servicemen from Ukraine's National Guard. The NPP's staff are continuing their work as usual, reportedly measuring radiation levels at the power plant six times a day. However, Meduza cannot verify the accuracy of this information.

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reported by 7x7 and later confirmed to Meduza by the journalists themselves, who

spoke to us while still in police custody. The journalists were working on dispatches from the city, which is near the border with Ukraine.

UPDATE: All three journalists have been released from police custody.

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More quick fire news

- **Talks talk:** Mykhailo Podolyak, an advisor to the Ukrainian President's Office, has refuted Moscow's claims that Kyiv refused negotiations, saying that President Zelensky has only rejected "unacceptable conditions and ultimatums from the Russian side."
- **Black Sea:** Zelensky reported that Turkey had banned the passage of Russian warships through the Black Sea straits. However, the Russian Embassy in Turkey told Interfax that Moscow hasn't received any notice from Ankara about the closure of the straits.
- **Severing TV ties:** Russia's VGTRK, Channel One, and the Ostankino radio house are suspending their membership in the European Broadcasting Union in response to Russia getting booted from Eurovision 2022.
- **Media censorship:** Russia's Defense Ministry issued a statement accusing

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as follows: “In order for our newsroom to publish your information, it needs to be provided. The Defense Ministry has yet to give a response to our request.”

- **Anti-war updates:** More than 2,200 Russian architects and urban planners have signed an open letter opposing the invasion of Ukraine. Meanwhile, Doxa journal reports that Russian university students have started receiving warnings telling them to “remember the negative legal consequences” of taking part in anti-war rallies.

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Kyiv on the morning of February 26.

Sergei Suoinsky / AFP / Scanpix / LETA

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Lithuania and Romania join the list of European countries that have closed their airspace to Russian airlines.

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The Kremlin's spokesman weighs in on Western sanctions

> "The sanctions are very serious [...] We also prepared for them seriously and in advance. Therefore, they are basically as predicted. [...] Of course, measures are being taken immediately to minimize the damage from these sanctions [and to ensure] the smooth functioning of all sectors of our economy. There is every possibility and potential for this. It was created in advance and prepared for such situations. Further analysis will be needed to develop response measures that will best suit our interests."

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News, news, news

- **Accusations against Belarus:** The head of Ukraine's State Border Service Serhiy Deyneko sent a letter to his Belarusian counterpart accusing Minsk of helping Russia wage a war against Ukraine. He closed the letter with the following message: "WE WILL WIN! BE DAMNED, BASTARDS! WITH DISDAIN!" (yes, in capital letters).
- **Air updates:** Russia has closed its airspace to flight from Bulgaria, Poland, and the Czech Republic, reports the Federal Air Transport Agency. Meanwhile, Latvia's airBaltic has canceled flights to Russia until March 26. Earlier, the airline canceled all flights to Ukraine until March 13.
- **Russians opposing the war:** More than 1,500 people working in Russia's IT industry have signed an open letter condemning the war against Ukraine. Moscow's Garage Museum of Contemporary Art has also announced plans to reschedule its exhibitions until "the human and political tragedy stops unfolding in Ukraine."

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Ministers, Roskomnadzor, the Defense Ministry, the Justice Ministry, the

Interior Ministry, the Foreign Affairs Ministry, and the Finance Ministry. Meduza tried to verify this information and found that the Finance and Justice Ministry websites were down; the other sites had difficulty loading, with the exception of the Kremlin's website, which opened right away. In addition, the Russian Defense Ministry's website has reportedly been returning an error code to many users abroad that reads "I'm a teapot."

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Unreliable at best What we know about Ukrainian and Russian casualties on day three of the invasion

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A petition opposing the war launched by prominent Russian human rights activist Lev Ponomarev has gathered more than 750,000 signatures.

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More news updates

- **Kyiv calls on the Red Cross:** Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk has appealed to the International Red Cross to help remove the bodies of Russian soldiers killed in Ukraine. “These are thousands of bodies of invaders […] The Russian Federation should know how many such bodies lie on Ukrainian soil,” Vereshchuk said in a public statement.
- **Ukraine’s capital extends its curfew:** From February 26–28, Kyiv will be under curfew from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m., announced Mayor Vitaly Klitschko. “All civilians on the street during the curfew will be considered members of enemy sabotage and reconnaissance groups,” the mayor warned.
- **Another anti-war appeal:** More than 200 municipal deputies from several Russian cities have signed an open letter opposing the war against Ukraine. The signatories hail from Moscow, St. Petersburg, Novosibirsk, and a number of other cities. “The decision to attack was made by Russian President Vladimir Putin personally. We are convinced that the citizens of Russia didn’t give him such a mandate,” the letter reads. “We urge you not to participate in the aggression and not to approve of it. Please, don’t be silent: only massive popular condemnation can stop the war.”
- **Mortars in the Rostov region:** The FSB reports that “fire from the Ukrainian side” was recorded in Russia’s Rostov region. Allegedly, three 120-mm mortars landed in the Millerovsky district. The FSB noted that there were no damages or casualties. As far as Meduza knows, this has not been independently confirmed.

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- **Coordinated denial:** Almost simultaneously and using the exact same wording, Russian news agencies TASS, RIA Novosti, and Interfax, citing sources in the Russian Defense Ministry, reported that Moscow wasn't responsible for the missile that struck a residential building in Kyiv. Instead, they claimed that the high-rise was hit by a Ukrainian anti-aircraft missile.
- **Arrests in Russia:** According to OVD-Info, at least 2,490 people have been arrested at anti-war protests in cities across Russia since February 24.
- **Airspace closures:** Estonia and Latvia have joined Bulgaria, Poland, and the Czech Republic in closing its airspace to Russian aircraft. In addition, the UK has banned Russia's flag carrier Aeroflot from flying into the country.
- **Tech troubles:** Users in Russia have reported having problems accessing Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram over the past 24 hours. According to the Net Freedoms Project, as of a few hours ago, Russia's censorship agency has started throttling Twitter and the platform is only available via VPN.

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Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky addresses Russians in Russia

"I want to be heard in Russia. Absolutely everyone. Thousands of victims, hundreds of prisoners, who simply can't understand why they were sent to Ukraine, sent to Ukraine to die, to kill others. The sooner you tell your government that this war needs to be stopped immediately, the more of your people will remain alive. We see that there are indeed protests by your citizens against the war. And we know that many in Russia are simply shocked by the meanness and cruelty of the authorities. This is a very correct reaction. I thank you for this reaction. Thank you Leonid Parfenov, Dmitry Muratov, Yuri Dud, Liya Akhedzhakova, Valery Meladze and the thousands and thousands of other decent Russians whose conscience sounds loudly. Just stop those who are lying, who are lying to you, lying to us, lying to everyone, to the whole world. We need to end this war."

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Ukrainian President's Office

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Traumatized by the news Levada Center director Denis Volkov on why we shouldn't expect a 'Donbas consensus' following Putin's recognition of the 'republics' in eastern Ukraine

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Please note: *The article above was originally published on February 22, 2022.*

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Commenting on Western sanctions against Russian officials such as himself, ex-prime minister and National Security Council Deputy Chairman Dmitry Medvedev said that "these marvelous prohibitions won't change anything." He also denied that he and his family members have any foreign bank accounts or property.

Medvedev then went on to warn that the sanctions may bring about a revision of Russia's foreign relations (specifically, he mentioned the possibility of Moscow withdrawing from the START-3 Treaty). "In principle, diplomatic relations are not particularly needed. It's time to put padlocks on the embassies," Medvedev declared.

In addition, Medvedev warned that Moscow may respond to Western asset freezes by seizing the assets of foreign nationals and companies in the Russian Federation or by nationalizing "the property of those persons who are registered in hostile jurisdictions."

Worryingly, Medvedev also suggested that the suspension of Russia's rights of representation at the Council of Europe is "a good opportunity to restore a number of important institutions, such as the death penalty for the most dangerous of criminals." Russia has had a moratorium on the death penalty since the late 1990s.

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In other news

- **Anti-war medics:** A group of more than 300 Russian medical workers have signed an open letter to Vladimir Putin voicing their strong opposition to Moscow's attack on Ukraine. "Our relatives, friends, patients, and colleagues are in the territories under attack. There isn't a single person among them who would benefit from the ongoing bloodshed," the letter reads. "We cannot stand on the sidelines of pain and suffering, which are increasing every minute."
- **Moldova shuts down Sputnik news:** The Moldovan authorities have blocked the website Sputnik Moldova, the local edition of the Russian state-owned news agency. Its editorial office was also informed that Sputnik Moldova will have to stop its radio broadcasts as of March 7.
- **Cyber attacks:** Both Russian Railways and Russia's national space agency, Roscosmos, reported that their websites suffered DDoS attacks on Saturday.
- **Donbas refugees:** Russia's Emergencies Ministry reports that the influx of evacuees from the Donbas has decreased — only 4,789 residents of the self-declared Donetsk and Luhansk "people's republics" have arrived in the Rostov

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60,000 and counting Russia scrambles to accommodate thousands as Donbas evacuations continue

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Ukraine reports on casualties on both sides

- **Ukraine's losses:** Tallying military and civilian casualties in the first two days of the war, Ukraine's Health Minister reported 198 killed and 1,115 injured as of Saturday morning. The fatalities include three children, and another 33 children were wounded.
- **Russia's losses:** According to the Ukrainian Defense Ministry, more than 3,500 Russian soldiers have been killed and nearly 200 have been taken hostage, reports The Kyiv Independent. In addition, the Ukrainian military reports that Russia has lost 14 planes, eight helicopters, 102 tanks, 536 armored vehicles, 15 heavy machine guns, and one BUK missile since February 24. The Russian Defense Ministry has yet to comment on these reports.

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Rescue workers in Kyiv evacuate residents from a building that was hit by a rocket.

Ukrainian President's Office

6 days ago

ON OUR LATEST PODCAST EPISODE

Putin vs. Ukrainian History

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Russia's federal censor orders 10 news outlets to cease independent invasion coverage or be blocked

Federal censor Roskomnadzor has threatened to block 10 news outlets for reporting on Russian attacks against cities and civilians in Ukraine. The agency also warned the publications that they will be blocked if they continue referring to Russia's "special military operation in the Donbas" using the terms "invasion," "attack," or "declaration of war." The authorities sent formal notices to Ekho

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Recent major events as of 10:30 a.m., Moscow time (2:30 a.m., New York time)

- **Zelensky at dawn:** In a new video shared on Telegram, President Zelensky stood outdoors in Kyiv, showing that he remains in the capital despite the approach of Russia's armed forces. He warned the public not to believe false reports that he's supposedly ordered the nation's surrender and urged Ukrainians to keep resisting the invasion. "This is our land. Our country. Our children. And we will defend it all," said the president.
- **A residential high-rise under attack:** A powerful explosion tore a large hole in a residential building in Kyiv's Zhuliany district, not far from the Sikorsky International Airport. The Ukrainian news agency UNIAN reported that the damage was caused by a missile. Unverified footage of the rocket attack later appeared on social media. The Zelensky administration has stated that there are no military installations near the building that sustained the attack. In fact, the president's office explained, one of the neighboring structures is a hospital with a maternity ward. Moscow has not commented on the incident.
- **The other kind of rocket:** Russia's national space agency has suspended Soyuz rocket launches from the Guiana Space Center from French Guiana in retaliation for the European Union's sanctions against Russia for the invasion of Ukraine. Roscosmos supplies Soyuz vehicles as part of the European Space Agency's program.
- **Moscow lists its victories:** Russia's Defense Ministry says its troops have captured the southeastern Ukrainian city of Melitopol, home to roughly 154,000 people. The Russian Navy says it has destroyed eight Ukrainian ships, while the Army claims to have disabled 821 military facilities (including 14 airfields, 19 command and communication centers, 24 anti-aircraft missile systems, and 48 radar stations). Russian soldiers have reportedly shot down seven Ukrainian warplanes, seven attack helicopters, and nine drones, and destroyed 87 tanks and other armored vehicles, 28 multiple launch rocket systems, and 118 military vehicles.

ПОКАЗАТЬ ЕЩЕ

37

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